



THE ARC of MINNESOTA

*Advocating and supporting people with
intellectual and other developmental disabilities
and their families as they choose how they
live, learn, work & play.*

January 7, 2011

Rep. Betty McCollum

1714 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. McCollum:

Thank you for your support of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Persons with disabilities and their families have and will benefit from the passage of the Act, and they will be hurt if the Act is repealed.

With the ACA, people with disabilities and their families will not have to worry about being denied coverage because they or their child with disabilities has a pre-existing condition. They will not have to worry that their health care coverage will face annual and lifetime caps, so they can then afford medical bills for chronic conditions they may need to treat.

The law benefits people with disabilities in other ways. At a minimum, all insurance policies will have to include products and services that help people with disabilities maintain and improve function, like rehabilitation services and durable medical equipment. Physicians, dentists, and other health professionals will be better trained to treat persons with disabilities. Data will be collected to see if people with disabilities are getting access to primary medical care. States will have more incentives to move people into services that help them live and participate in their communities.

The law also contains a new program that is designed not only to meet future needs of those who develop disabilities but will work to make our long-term care system more fiscally sustainable. The Community Living Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) program would create national, long-term services insurance. It would help eligible individuals and their families meet long-term needs with a cash benefit and wouldn't force them into poverty to receive Medicaid benefits. The program's goal is to make it financially feasible for people to get the long-term care benefits they need, keep them in the community for as long as possible, and take pressure off the Medicaid system so it can support those with more intensive needs.

We support your position against repealing the Affordable Care Act. We believe repeal would rollback benefits that the Act provides for persons with disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

Pat Mellenthin, The Arc of Minnesota Executive Director